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Exhibitions at New York Galleries

THE long and splendid series of gifts, embracing nearly every period of art, presented to the Metropolitan Museum by J. P. Morgan, more than three thousand objects gathered by Mr. Morgan's father, are housed appropriately in the "Pierpont Morgan wing" of the museum—the wing formerly known as the Decorative Arts wing. In order that the public may enjoy this collection to the fullest extent Edward Robinson, director of the museum, has issued a brief guide, which furnishes details of the arrangement of the Morgan collection, together with the necessary historical comment.

The guide offers a summary description of the collections of European art earlier in date than the seventeenth century, as-

sembled in the Pierpont Morgan wing. Works of art earlier in date than the eighteenth century are exhibited on the first floor of the Morgan wing. Eighteenth century art is exhibited on the second floor. The galleries on the second floor remain the same except for the addition of the collections of snuff boxes, vanity boxes, scent bottles, dance programs and watches included in Mr. Morgan's recent gift. The Le Breton collection of French faience, now installed in Wing H, will be removed to the Morgan wing, where it will be appropriately shown in connection with the other exhibits of French decorative arts.

Important changes, however, have been made in the galleries on the first floor. In the entrance, or south, vestibule is exhib-



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ited the collection of Merovingian and related art. The early Christian, Byzantine and Romanesque material is assembled in the first gallery, F2, on the west side of the hall. The next gallery, F3, is devoted to Gothic art of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the following, F4, to fourteenth and fifteenth century material of the same period. In the adjoining gallery, F5, are the sculptures from the Chateau de Biron. Examples of Gothic sculpture and furniture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are shown in the north gallery, F6. Opening out of this gallery is the Flims roof, F11, with its carved panelling of the seventeenth century.

Visitors come then to the main hall, F7. Except at the south end, where two groups of Renaissance sculpture are exhibited, the

hall is devoted mainly to Gothic sculpture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Art of the Renaissance period is exhibited in gallery F8, which may be entered from the south end of the main hall. Thence the visitor proceeds to the gallery, F9, containing exhibits of seventeenth century art, chiefly of the period of Louis XIV. With this gallery commences the series of rooms, continued on the second floor, in which are exhibited French decorative arts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The collections are installed, as far as possible, in chronological sequence, and the visitor is strongly urged by Director Robinson to follow the route described above.

The collection of Merovingian art, a very notable collection, covers, roughly, the period from the late years of the Roman Empire to about the middle of the eighth century. The objects are principally articles

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of personal adornment or use, which were found in tombs at Niederbreisig and in various parts of France. There are many beautiful gold objects in the collection, together with characteristic specimens of the glass paste and stone inlay of Merovingian jewelry.

The collections of early Christian, Byzantine and Romanesque art, dating mainly from the sixth century through the twelfth, are provided with an admirable background by the rough plaster walls of the gallery, these tinted to the warm tones of old marble. Color and lighting effects are arranged subtly to provide agreeable atmosphere. Late Roman bone carvings, early Christian ivory boxes and examples of gilded glass, an interesting piece of sculpture depicting the popular theme of Jonah and the whale, are features of the collection.

Among the Byzantine articles are gold and silver vessels, silver plates which form part of a treasure discovered by peasants in 1903 on the island of Cyprus and depicting scenes from the story of David, and beautiful ivory diptyches of the sixth century. There are also rare specimens of Byzantine book covers, devotional tablets and boxes for incense and sacred objects, together with Saracenic ornaments. The Byzantine enamels which formed part of the famous Swenigorodskoi collection, are among the greatest treasures of the Morgan collection.

Gothic art, displayed in Gallery F3, displays the rich hues of tapestry and stained glass and the glow of gold and enamel. Above the cases hang the famous sacrament tapestries, part of a series representing the seven sacraments with Old Testament prototypes, Burgundian work of the fifteenth century. Superb in design and color, the thirteenth century stained glass in the windows is a notable feature of this gallery. Enamels and ivories constitute the greater part of the exhibits, mostly French work of the thirteenth century. One of the most important objects is the large gabled shrine, or possibly repository, for the Holy

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Sacrament, which is exhibited in a pedestal case. It is of wood, covered inside and on the front with plates of Limoges enamel of the thirteenth century and further enriched with figures in relief of copper gilt. The French ivories of the fourteenth century form a delightful and varied group.

The Gothic art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, found in Gallery F4, includes ivories, metal work and enamels of French, German and Italian workmanship. The color scheme for this installation is based on the lovely shade of rose occurring in the tapestries. In Gallery F5 are the objects from the Chateau de Biron, obtained by Pons de Gontaut, who accompanied Charles VIII on his ill-planned expedition into Italy, and who later, with permission of the Pope, founded a private chapel in the Chateau de Biron in southwestern France. This collection contains unrivalled specimens. Gothic sculpture and furniture shown in F6, include an excep-

tionally interesting piece, a large painted wood statue of the seated Virgin with the Christ child. Finely carved oak chests and cabinets ornament this collection.

In the main hall, among objects of Gothic and Renaissance sculpture, is a marvelous example of Spanish Gothic carving, a retable in alabaster, which extends across the north end of the hall. It was originally in the chapel of the archiepiscopal palace in Zaragoza, and bears the arms of Don Dalmacio de Mur (died 1456). The Renaissance art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, shown in F4, displays magnificent examples of the goldsmith's art, which glitter against blue backgrounds. Here is the Cellini cup and seven precious examples of the coveted Henri II ware of which hardly more than ninety pieces in all are known. Engraved chrystals, objects in amber, gold embroidered altar frontals, carvings of amazing dexterity in boxwood, Venetian enamels, sculptures in marble, bronze and terra cotta, furniture, stained glass are included in this extraordinary collection.